

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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HOUSE PASSES BILL PROVIDING SPECIAL PAYS FOR COMBAT-WOUNDED VETERANS

Representative Markey Declares Victory For Crosby Puller Act

WASHINGTON, DC - Days away from Memorial Day, the House of Representatives affirmed its commitment to our nation's wounded soldiers by passing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, which included a new special pay for soldiers wounded in combat based on legislation introduced by Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA) on behalf of a constituent and Marine, Lance Corporal James Crosby of Winthrop, MA.

"With thousands of soldiers serving in the Middle East, this vote sends an important signal to our men and women in combat about our respect for their service. We cannot abandon our soldiers when they are wounded on the battle field. This bill will provide a new special pay for soldiers when they are evacuated from the combat zone for treatment," Rep. Markey stated. "I appreciate the hard work of Chairman Duncan Hunter and his staff, who immediately understood the injustice in the James Crosby case and were willing to work on a bipartisan basis to correct it."

The bill includes a new special pay for soldiers wounded in combat, a direct response to Rep. Markey's efforts on behalf of a constituent, Marine Lance Corporal James Crosby and is based on legislation Markey introduced last year titled the "Crosby-Puller" Act. This special pay, "Combat-related Injury Rehabilitation Pay," would provide \$430/month to a soldier like James Crosby, who was wounded by mortar fire in Iraq and was evacuated through Kuwait and Germany to the United States. Upon his evacuation, James saw his combat pay immediately slashed, even though he was paralyzed and fighting for his life. Crosby is one of 6,342 wounded soldiers who would benefit from the provisions for wounded troops in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006.

It is in the immediate aftermath of serious wounds that a soldier's financial needs begin to mount. In recognition of this injustice, the new bill would provide this new special pay up to the day that the soldier receives insurance for traumatic injury.

H.R. 1815 authorizes \$441.6 billion in this year's budget for Department of Defense and national security programs. The Senate will take up the bill in June.

For more information on Rep. Markey's work to protect the special pays of combat-wounded veterans check out: <http://www.house.gov/markey/>

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